



ELECTRICCANADIAN.COM
AGRICULTURE & WILDLIFE
ARTICLES
BETH'S FAMILY TREE
BOOKS
BUSINESS
CHILDREN'S STORIES
CLANS & FAMILIES

CULTURE & LANGUAGE
DONNA'S PAGE
ELECTRICSCOTLAND.NET
FAMOUS SCOTS
FAMILYTREE
FORUMS
FOOD & DRINK
GAMES

GAZETTEER
GENEALOGY
HISTORIC PLACES
HISTORY
HUMOR
JOHN'S PAGE
KIDS
LIFESTYLE
MUSIC

NEWSLETTER
PICTURES
POETRY
POSTCARDS
RELIGION
ROBERT BURNS
SCOTS IRISH
SCOTS REGIMENTS
SERVICES

SHOPPING
SONGS
SPORT
SCOTS DIASPORA
TARTANS
TRAVEL
TRIVIA
VIDEOS
WHATS NEW

HELP TERMS OF USE CONTACT US

Electric Scotland's Weekly Newsletter for March 11th, 2016

To see what we've added to the Electric Scotland site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/whatsnew.htm>

To see what we've added to the Electric Canadian site view our What's New page at:

<http://www.electriccanadian.com/whatsnew.htm>

For the latest news from Scotland see our ScotNews feed at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/>

Electric Scotland News

Well I am somewhat confused as Steve was meant to have sent the hard disk to SFU but from what I can see they ended up discussing ftp'ing the information instead but then it looked like whatever they tried didn't work. All that said I'll just keep publishing while they get it sorted out.

News from the Scottish Press this week...

Note that there is more news on our ScotNews feed so this is just some highlights from them.

What is the named person scheme?

From 31 August of this year, a named person will be appointed to monitor the welfare of every child in Scotland.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-35752756>

Leadership warning over health and social care services

Research for the Auditor General and the Accounts Commission said current ways of working were unsustainable.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-35768504>

GERS 2014-15: Reasons to be Cheerful

The Government Expenditure & Revenue Scotland (GERS) figures for 2014-15 were published this morning¹. If you've followed Chokkablog then the figures will come as no surprise.

Read more at:

<http://chokkablog.blogspot.ca/2016/03/gers-2014-15-reasons-to-be-cheerful.html>

Controversial higher education bill passed by MSPs

The Higher Education Governance Bill had proved controversial, with the government agreeing to cut some measures from the legislation.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-35759904>

Scotland's financial services sector

The number of people employed across Scotland's finance sector has reached almost 157,000, according to a study published today.

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/business/companies/financial/in-numbers-scotland-s-financial-services-sector-1-4049464>

The history of how Scotland brought golf to America

THE precious cargo of two dozen gutta-perch balls, three woods, three irons and a putter arrived at the doorstep of John Reid's new home in Yonkers

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/heritage/the-history-of-how-scotland-brought-golf-to-america-1-4049651>

Warning as R&D spend on Scottish pharma sector plummets

Scotland is competing for R&D investment with sophisticated scientific hubs in London, Oxford and Cambridge, and also internationally

Read more at:

<http://www.scotsman.com/business/companies/warning-as-r-d-spend-on-scottish-pharma-sector-plummets-1-4044876>

David Cameron warns of SNP one party state

He also described what he saw as the SNP's litany of failure in power.

Read more at:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-35719980>

Electric Canadian

The Yukon Territory

It's History and Resources (pdf)

You can download this book at: <http://www.electriccanadian.com/history/yukon/yukonhistory.pdf>

A Brief Sketch of the Life and Work of the Rev. Robert Campbell

Minister of St. Gabriel Church, Montreal by the Rev. G. Colborne Heine, BA, Minister Emeritus (1922) (pdf)

You can download this book at: http://www.electriccanadian.com/Religion/robert_campbell.pdf

Electric Scotland

Soldiers of the church

The Story of What the Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanters) of North America, Canada, and the British Isles, Did to Win the World War of 1914-1918

The authentic records gathered and preserved in this volume show the part which the Covenanter Church took in the great war of 1914-1918 to defend Christian liberty and democracy against the long-premeditated and gigantically prepared-for attack of Germany and her allies, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria, in an effort to dominate the world by a brutal and immoral military despotism.

These records establish the fact that the Covenanter's attitude toward civil government does affect his loyalty to his country but that it affects it by emphasizing it, and they show that 74 per cent of the entire membership of the American Covenanter Church were enrolled in the various departments of military service, a percentage probably greater than that of any other denomination.

People who do not understand, marvel that a Covenanter will give his life for his country but withholds his vote at election time. A Covenanter will give his life because of his loyalty to his country, and withholds his vote at election time because of his loyalty to Christ. To become a soldier he is required to swear loyalty to his country, and that he is always eager to do; but to vote at art election he is required to swear to a Constitution of Civil Government that does not recognize the existence of God, the authority of Christ over the nation, nor any obligation to obey His moral law; and that his conception of loyalty to Christ will not permit him to do.

This volume is 'published to show the true character of the Covenanter, and to aid in securing for him his rightful place in history.

The Scotch are proverbially prompt, thorough and fearless in performance, but loth to talk of their achievements; and in their war work, herein recorded, all Covenanters show their Scotch ancestry. More than six hundred, American Covenanters were in the war, above two hundred of whom went overseas, and many of. these were with Pershing fighting their way to the Rhine. The secretary of the Church's Win-the-War Committee told how all but impossible it was to get any of our ministers, so many of whom rendered splendid service and a great deal of it, here at home, to report their work. And the boys in the flaming battle lines, like their pastors,

are true sons of their heroic forbears. Scores of others than Covenanter soldiers published whole books of their adventures in trenches, going over the top, and in NoMan's Land, and thrilled audiences with their stories. But Covenanter soldiers wrote never a line to their own Church weekly, and their home letters from the front line trenches, or from "Somewhere in France enroute to the Rhine," at least those letters of which we have learned, almost invariably concluded with a warning not to allow the Editor of their Church paper to have them.

Prof. Wm. M. Sloane, author of The Century Co.'s "Life of Napoleon," of "The Balkan States," and other standard histories, in an article written for the Christian Nation, spoke of the high place accorded to Covenanters by great historians after the Reformation, but only the most widely read and unprejudiced students of both political and Church history understand why they merit such distinguished praise. The Covenanters themselves have not written history. They have merely made it. And so, the author of this volume, himself denied the privilege of companionship with his young friends in the camps or on the battlefields, is endeavoring to do for them that which they would not even assist in doing for themselves, relate their share in history-making during the period of the war, enshrine their deeds, and perpetuate the memory of their valor and their loyalty to Christ and their country.

Download this book at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/bible/soldiers.htm>

Book of Scotsmen

Eminent for Achievements in Arms and Arts, Church and State, Law, Legislation, and Literature, Commerce, Science, Travel, and Philanthropy by Joseph Irving (1880)

You can download this book from <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/bookscotsmen.pdf>

Arthur St. Clair

Found a new book about him and have added a synopsis of the book and a link to where it can be purchased at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/stclair/>

Norman MacPhail Blair

Added a medley of 4 songs to the foot of his page at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/blair_norman.htm

John Henderson

John sent in another two songs which I've added to the foot of his page at:

<http://www.electricscotland.com/poetry/doggerels.htm>

Sir Robert Strange, Engraver

Added an article and a 2 volume book about him to his page at:

http://www.electricscotland.com/history/other/strange_robert.htm

James McHenry

Soldier-Statesmen of the Constitution.

You can read about him at: http://www.electricscotland.com/history/america/james_mchenry.htm

Speech by the Right Hon, Sir Lyon Playfair

Member for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews, on the Medical Act Amendment Bill, Delivered on the Second Reading, in the House of Commons, on 22d June 1884. (pdf)

You can download this at: <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/medical/speech.pdf>

THE STORY

The Laird and his Tenants

By Charles Edwardes (1906)

There is not much doing in the village on the loch to-day. The water shines serene for the shore hills to use as a mirror, and cats and men bask on its malodorous margin. Until yesterday, for a week there was something of the excitement of real methodical industry in the place. A barque, with all sails set, had crept in from the sea and dropped anchor under the lee of the humpy little peninsula which makes from the mainland as if it had meant to cut the loch in two but had suddenly decided that it was not worth while. Coal for the winter was in that barque, and from the minister of the manse downwards in the scale of importance every householder with pence to spare purchased coal. The inn took small cart-loads of it. The stalwart village Macs, who seem so wasted on the effortless daily round of their lives, dragged wheelbarrows over the shingle, achieving several journeys in the day, pausing between them to sit on the handles of their barrows, re-light their pipes, and talk. Their haggard wives (poor ill-fed souls), instead of climbing on to the moor with

creels for peats, established in the wet mud and sand a trail of bare foot-prints, for the tide later to wash out; they went to and fro without pause.

Each tide which floated the barque showed it higher and higher in the gull-flecked water. Now it is buoyant, almost as a cork, and waits for a wind to depart; and the village is normal again. The men discuss the chance of a rousing breeze from the west which shall flush the loch with many sea-trout in addition to salt-water, and give them a profitable night with the nets.

They also discuss the laird, not affectionately. When he comes north next week with his fine Southron friends, to shoot, fish, and enjoy himself as lairds seem born to do (and for little else in the village opinion), will he, as a year ago, make a disagreeable fuss about the taking of these sea-trout which the village sends off stealthily in boxes to the little port eight miles away, thence to be caught up by a steamer and so to "Glesca hersel"? Such journeying compares favourably with the feats of transport a hundred years ago, when the fresh salmon were despatched on horseback from Gairloch to the Moray Firth (a two days' jog), there boiled, and sent on thus for London's eating. Locally, the laird's water-bailiffs have been slack at repression these many months. Ever since, in March, Tammias Macrea was shot by one of them in the stomach, feeling round the loch has been of the smouldering dangerous kind. If Tammias's stomach hadn't been a wonderful one, and the catch of salmon that night abundantly consoling, he would have died of the bullet. The doctor himself says so, yet has advised Tammias never to risk a second such accident. But Tammias is related by blood-ties to half the village and his wound is a personal affair with two score other manly Macreas and some Mackenzies to boot; and the water-bailiffs have had it put to them very straight that they will not die in their beds if there is any more shooting. Hence they wink discreetly for a season at the nightly water excursions with nets. The winkers look sour and fierce enough in the daytime, yet have next to nothing to say to the robbers (so they term them) whether in warning or defiance. The robbers themselves smile and do not mind their looks. If the keepers refrain from more deeds, they may be forgiven even that shot at and into Tammias Macrea. The laird, however, is another matter. Depend upon it, he will not like to find his river practically void of the sea-trout and salmon he is coming north to capture, and so intestine war may soon arise.

Meantime, under the golden sunshine and the blue beauty of the scene, the village stalwarts sit and smoke and gossip while their wives work. A minister of Lochgillean many years ago, in reporting upon the social and fiscal state of his flock, declared that "idleness was almost the only comfort they enjoyed." One might say the same of these villagers, with the substantial addition of magnificent if not florid health, and sundry grievances whose removal would put their tongues at a loss.

They do not see many visitors here, a fact which explains their marked curiosity about the few who come. Now and then a vagrant young gentleman arrives at the inn, for the fishing, but the tendency is for him to hurry elsewhere after scornfully staring at the bare legs and thatched huts round about him. The fishing is indifferent and the village smells are strong. The inn is an ancient house flanked by mean and mouldy cots which let loose many children, who gape at the stranger and follow him about with whispered remarks, critical and admiring. The schoolmaster, a handsome whiskered man, fully mindful of his university education of thirty years ago, does his best on these occasions to divert the ruder instincts of his flock. It is excellent to see him first sweep off his hat in too courteous salutation of the tourist and then break into Gaelic denunciations of the youngsters. These fly smiling before him, the more intelligent of the boys, like enough, in the direction of the dominie's own snug nest apart from the village, his absence from which gives them at least a chance of raiding the raspberries, currants, and green embryonic apples of his garden; others, if the day be warm, to snatch a dip in the loch, with the lassies sitting afar off on land in respectful envy of man's enterprise. On very hot days it is no uncommon thing to come upon a small regiment of the boys in the uniform of Adam marching up the road (the school is at the end of the village) with sticks on their shoulders for muskets, chanting a warrior's song while the lassies clap their hands to the sho.. The dominie, good easy man, sees nothing reprehensible in some sport. He even condones the occasional spoiling of his garden when this is not carried out under his very eyes. "They've all their troubles before them," he says on this subject, "and hunger's a harder master than I have any wish to be, poor laddies. Ay, and I was one myself once, yes, indeed."

The laird, who comes north only for the killing of stags, grouse, and fish, knows little about the village's battle for even the first necessities of existence. He is an Englishman, like so many lairds nowadays, and does not understand the Celtic-Norse temperament which seems to compel these people to half-starve at home rather than go boldly into the world and earn man's wages elsewhere. So the minister says, and the dominie. The minister dines once a year with his lairdship in the grouse month, and then edges in sympathetic words about rents and advisable concessions to the needy. Something generous always ensues, but the laird's impatience with the foolishness of people who seem wilfully blind to the world's opportunities is just as constant. And there is always also that irritant of what he reasonably enough terms the poaching of his waters. What is he to make of God-fearing rascals who plot to take his salmon and sea-trout even while they stride from the chapel door in their Sabbath black, with the minister's last prayer (a long and eloquent one for certain) still echoing in their ears? It irritates him still more that they do not get decently out of the way of his motor-car, (themselves, their womenfolk, and their poultry) when he toots down that street of hovels fronting the loch. Nor do they bend their strong lazy heads to him, nor doff their bonnets, with anything like the air of inevitability which he has perhaps the right to expect from them. He is a somewhat new laird, and has not taken pains to study the Highland character. The remark may indeed be hazarded that in these matters he is on a par with Mr. Creevey's friend Western, who confessed that he knew as little of history, even of his own country, "as any gentleman need do." There are lairds and lairds, and he belongs rather to the numerous body between the two categories.

The poverty in the village is very genuine. They do not beg, save in the dumb appeal of their pinched and wrinkled faces, which are

yet consistent with health and energy. Their pride and lack of practice in the art deter them. They leave this to the shameless vagabond tinkers who set their wigwags in the woods lower down the loch side and come whining softly at the stranger with outstretched hands, and later ask even the cottars for one or two of the dried cuddies which fringe their thatch. But anything they can earn on a fair pretext is a Godsend to them. The other day, for example, I was followed a long mile by a meek old woman with enormous feet who wondered if I might be needing a pair of home-spun stockings. That was how she expressed it, reflectively, while she stroked the grey hairs on her chin and viewed the quiet design of the hose I chanced to be wearing. Her husband, a joiner as much or little as anything else, had, she said, a week ago conceived just that notion: "Maybe the gentleman could do with a pair of stockings, or some yards of cloth." Since then she had waited her opportunity, and now she had summoned up courage to stalk me to a standstill. They were astonishing stockings when they came, a pattern of sunsets and rainbows on a green ground; but the comfort in the old lady's eyes as she took the money was some compensation for their impossible garishness. She confessed, when coaxed, that she was in debt for meal to the grocer, like everyone else: "But I'll be easier in my mind the noo," she added. It is in this village by the loch just a little as it was throughout Scotland in 1476, when an Act of Parliament ran in preamble, "Because victuals are right scant within the country and the most supportation that the Realm has is by strangers of diverse nations that bring victuals, &c., &c." The supportation of strangers does not work here so directly as amid the fancy landscapes of the Trossachs and on the main touring-routes; but it works, as witness the alien laird and the alien integers who come to the inn and go thence holding their noses after paying their dues.

Of course not more than a particle or so of the old das feeling now survives even in this remote village. Three hundred years ago it was a typical little barrack of filibusters, all ready at a word to follow the local chieftain anywhere. A few miles south of the other side of the loch lay the hill country of their dearly-beloved enemy and nearest neighbour dan, with sea-loch of their own from which boats sailed forth and round into our loch to fight for fighting's sake, a compliment which was promptly requited when the weather and want of other engagements permitted. Tradition tells of the bloodshed in these bouts. At one time the largest galley of the other clan had the ill-luck to get pinned on a rock at the mouth of our loch, and more than threescore cursing and fully armed warriors in it. Then did our men swarm round that hapless shipload of their foes and enjoy themselves. They picked them off at their leisure, either on the rock itself or in the water, with much ungallant abuse of their victims and their victims' ancestry. They were not so civilised here as in the Glenorchy lands farther south, whose lord in that same century commanded all his householders to furnish themselves with the preposterous and burdensome luxury of a kail-yard for red kail, white kail, and onions. The king's warrant was then something to smile at on this loch-side. Who was the king, pray, unless their own great man gave him a certificate of character? Their own great man was idol and Providence in one. Blood of their blood, they lived for him and on him, with merely casual appeals to the sea for its herrings and the land for a sufficiency of meal, with mutton, beef, and venison when by their lord willed, or the fortunes of war favoured.

And now the descendants of these men exist here like the stranded relics of an old time. The intermediate centuries have given them schools, vaccination, and a freedom from dependence which even yet they do not know what to do with. It is dinned into their unwilling ears by kinsfolk in half a dozen colonies and the manufacturing towns of the south that they ought to be doing better for themselves, but they seem to receive the information only with puckered lips and doubts. They are so pledged to the shopkeeper for flour, sugar, and sundries that they are morally bound to the soil on the loch-side. With their sons it is different. These make their way on to one or other of the world's highroads, and succeed or fail as may hap. There is the blacksmith, with one lad a doctor in London, another an engineer in Glasgow, a third thriving in New Zealand, and a fourth who has just sent home from British Columbia a nugget of gold which his old father has paraded up and down the village this week past with a high white head. Only the other day one of these Glasgow immigrants from the loch-side came home with distressing abruptness. He was the sole son of his mother, a matched old lady with a wrinkled yellow face, and went south to keep the home alive upon his Glasgow earnings. Suddenly he fell from a ladder and broke his neck, and four days later, in long procession, the village escorted his white coffin with the cheap gilding on it to the churchyard alongside the manse. He had left money for just this journey if the fate befell him, and his tottering old mother welcomed his body as the last good thing she could now expect from life. This much only of the old dan spirit remains in the village; its exiles determine to rest after death with their forefathers and not amid the nameless crowds of a town.

One day the handsomest and most daring of the fishermen gave me a call with a brace of fine sea-trout which he sought to sell. There was policy in his visit, as well as commerce and courtesy. He is the afore-mentioned Tammis Macrea's own brother-in-law and declared champion against the water-bailiffs, whom he has challenged in the good old style to come between him and what he considers his rightful prey in the harvest of the sea. He it is who arranges for the disposal of the packed salmon and trout when these make bulk, and many village homes look to him for their maintenance. A superb physical specimen is he, with the eyes of an eagle under his black hair and dark blue bonnet. He had some questions to ask when our transaction was concluded. Begging to be excused for his inquisitiveness, he desired to know about my politics. Was I by chance a Radical? It was just a little pathetic, however, to come at his interpretation of that forceful word. He knew and cared next to nothing about the programme of Westminster's representative Radicals; all he saw in the word was its battle cry for men like himself and his brother freebooters, who retain or have acquired the simple belief that it is not just for lairds and the law to say, "Thou shalt not take white fish from the sea." He was pardonably anxious moreover that I should not inform the laird or the considerable trafficking in these same white fish which went on in the village. His arguments were of course plausible, and he was extremely picturesque in the fine heat with which he elaborated them. He regarded lairds as little better than tyrants. Who but this laird and his predecessors, he enquired, had to be thanked (that is, execrated) for the decay of the village? In the lifetime of my visitor's father herring-boats were actually built on the loch-side and sold as far north as Stornaway. But such industry did not suit the laird of that day who, wanting no sound of hammers in his valley, crippled the industry so that it died. And now there were the deer. A man could not wander about the mountains without meeting a

surly loon strung with a telescope who turned him back in his master's name. All the fresh-water lochs and the very burns were also under the control of these same loons. A stranger like myself might get permission to fish them, but a villager by no means. It was an article of faith with the laird (and with all lairds, my visitor believed) that the native-born were to be persecuted out of existence, or at least out of the homes which they had inherited from their forefathers. "They treat us," he said, "as if we were trespassers in the land that gave us birth. I'm telling you the truth, they do." And so on, and so on. After the interview he strode off cheerfully, having given me his hand and the assurance of his conviction that, if I was not exactly a Radical of his kind, I was well disposed towards him and his principles.

Well disposed? One could hardly be aught else in the abstract. It was when, with the laird's permission, I fished in the laird's own tidal river and caught nothing worth a turn of the reel that the other side of the picture came very much home to me. That morning more than a hundred sea-trout, weighing from half a pound up to three pounds apiece, had been hoisted from the salt water within a stone's throw of the mouth of that once famous stream. There had been handsome rain for a week, and by all portents the fish ought to have got into the river and the fresh-water loch three miles up the valley. But it was never a one for me; and the laird's own son, installed at the lodge with his rod betimes, had spent a whole week for a single salmon, and that only a six-pounder. The laird's head-keeper and the laird's son both talked heatedly about necks which deserved twisting; and the former especially, being a man of a distant clan, hoped with all his heart that his master would stand no nonsense with the rogues. That bullet in Tammas Macrea had been richly paid for with these months of unhindered poaching. A doughty fellow was this head-keeper, with the tuft of pine in his bonnet to declare his primary devotion to the Grants of Speyside. He would risk much to reinstate the laird's dignity in the land, and had little sympathy with the Southron weakness which, on the Tammas Macrea news, had bidden the laird write to his men not to establish a blood feud; better a little lawlessness than that. Hoots! one may die worse deaths than fighting. This doughty headkeeper was built on the mould of that Captain Lamont of the Black Watch who bewailed the hardship of his lot in going out of the world in his bed "like a manufacturer"; he loved a mellay for its own sake.

But, on the other hand, a contrast of the laird's luxury, even in his Highland lodge, with the privations of my poor friends the Macs of the village, was enough and more to make me half the Radical that leading Macrea would have had me be. I was in the cabin of one Sandy Macrea in the morning, and that same afternoon was shown the glories of what to the laird was a mere pleasure-box for a month or two in the year. Sandy's cabin was warranted three hundred years old, and still had for a chimney only a hole in the thatch of the kind which authorities on Highland domestic architecture used to think so fine an aid to the seasoning/ of timber and so sound a preventive of rheums, catarrhs, and fevers. I could not stand upright in Sandy's parlour, and could just touch its side walls at the same time. Ceiling and walls were papered with newspapers, some of mid-Victorian days. The floor was black earth hardened by the tread of Sandy's boots and his grey-haired sister's feet. There was a small niche in the parlour for the lady of the house to sleep in; and Sandy himself snored o' nights in the handsbreadth of shedding the other side, of the wall. The house had but this one room, in fact, which was kitchen as well as parlour; though inasmuch as breakfast and supper consisted of only a small bowl of stirabout apiece, and dinner what sea-fish Sandy could take in a borrowed boat, the room was more parlour than kitchen. No rent was paid for the cabin, which had bred Macreas unceasingly since the time of Queen Elizabeth; and on earnest calculation Sandy thought that maybe he and his sister spent on their joint maintenance from half-a-crown to three shillings a week. They looked marvellous well on it too, and asked for not much better than the power to make sure of just those two or three weekly shillings.

But there was the rub. Save these nocturnal catches of white fish in the loch, Sandy had not a resource in the world, and it was only in the rare coming of a visitor to the village that Sandy's sister could earn a trifle as a laundress. Yet the contentment of this couple of middle-aged happy-go-luckies! They rejoiced in the beauty of the outlook from their slit of a door and peephole of a window as if they were emotional cockneys among the mountains for but a fortnight. They were nigh above the fish smells of the village, and they rejoiced also in the nettles and clover of the green slope from their cottage door. The distant hills, the nearer water, and the pageants of sunrise and sunset, were, so the sister declared with bright eyes, daily sights better to them than salt to their brose. And hap what might, both of them wanted no more of life than the privilege of just existing as they did until it was time to die in the little house, which could in the past have served only as a sort of hutch at night-time for a larger family. The laird, said Sandy's sister, part mirthful and part indignant, had tried to persuade Sandy to go to a town, and set up as a painter. But why on earth should he do the likes o' that foolishness, Sandy's sister mocked, when he was so well off where he was, and in his own country moreover, where everybody respected him?

It was good to gossip with such contentment in the midst of what would seem unbearable poverty in Poplar or Shoreditch. There it would mean not only poverty, but degradation and the world's contempt. To Sandy Macrea and his sister there was no shadow of such a fear. They laughed at the smallness of their porridge-bowls and put their trust in Providence. It was as if they had been brought up on Jean Paul Richter, as well as the irreducible minimum of nourishment for health, strength, and spirits. "What," asks Richter, "is poverty, that a man should moan under it? It is but like the pain of piercing the ears of a maiden, and you hang precious jewels in the wound." I gather that the minister of Sandy's kirk preaches pretty often on this same text. But he need not trouble even to do that for these two. Sandy and his sister have a priceless dower of resignation and dignity of their own, nor would I for a small bribe offer either of them a half-crown except on some specious pretext of a reciprocal service.

And from Sandy's cabin, in an hour or two, I found myself at the laird's lodge, a little palace of grey granite, with leaded extinguisher turrets and every modern luxury inside. The mountains rise like a cleft wall behind it, so that with the naked eye one might see a stag

if it chose to perch on the summit of the topmost precipice, three thousand feet above the grapes in the lodge conservatories. And the stags often do so choose, in the summer, though in the winter there are sheltered glens and corries enough for them in the many square miles of mountain and valley over which the laird reigns triumphant. Dark brooding crags, the crashing of white waters from their midst, thick woods of pine and fir, the shining river in the valley, the silver pool of the nearest loch, and gardens teeming with fruit are here at the service of the laird when it pleases him to enjoy them. The rhododendron makes banks of many colours by the roadside and in the lodge woods. There are hedges of fuchsia by the lawns, roseries that astonish in such a latitude, rustic summer-houses on little beauty-spots, rotting raspberries in the garden of a size the village dominie's caterans would hardly believe possible, ripe strawberries enough for a village, and a very prince of kail-yards in which every vegetable seems the candidate for a prize-show. Glass-houses also are there, where grapes, peaches, nectarines, plums, pears, and purple figs are all ready in a moment to put on the very bloom of perfection for their master's pleasure; acres of glass, screening such good things in such abundance that I do not wonder to hear that much of it all rots like the raspberries.

I was admiring the tortured ingenuity of the apple-trees, loaded with fruit in this lavish garden, when a sudden "Look!" drew my attention to the mountains. It was the laird's pet eagle. The fiat has gone forth in this as in other Highland territories that the king of birds is no longer to be shot like a pirate pest, but cherished. The laird's eagle has its eyrie among the sheer crags above the lodge, and is wont to float at its ease in the air between the mountain-top and the turret of his benefactor. There is also now a mate to him, and eaglets are expected. Local opinion does not run at all even with the laird's on the interesting subject of his strong-pinioned favourite. The farmers of course send in claims for lambs. His lairdship's keepers are at one with the farmers in their detestation of that composed shape drifting so tranquilly out of gunshot in the blue upper air. They wonder what the laird can be thinking about. He might, in their ignorant belief, as sensibly welcome grouse-disease, or the small-pox. It is not as if the birds merely take toll of the lambs, with now and then a very young calf to their names also; their feud with the hinds and their young in the mountains is just as resolute, and would, with most lairds, be a deciding mark against them. But our own particular laird does not heed that, and so the eagles here are to live just as nature bids them.

From the lodge and its surprising grounds I ascend into the mountains by that white torrent. There are little lochs full of fish high up, and I am permitted to look at them. The track in this savage and very contracted stairway is as smooth and fine as a park walk. There are, I discover, miles and miles of other tracks in the hollows between the mountains, where the lochs with their pink and white sanded shores are now consecrated entirely to the deer. "Ay, they're the old foot-roads, but they're not used now. You see, it's all in the forest," is the information I receive from my verderer guide. Asked if he would prevent a Macrea of my village from crossing the glen at our feet by the ribbon of road which is still so very white and broad, the verderer is very positive on the point. He would not trouble himself in the winter, when no sane Macrea would be after taking such a short cut through the mountains; but in the summer, with the shooting-season at hand, he'd like to see the Macrea or the Mac-anything who would escape his vigilance. "Would you knock him down if he refused to keep off the road his forefathers' feet made?" I ask, rather flamboyantly. The verderer did not think the law empowered him to go quite so far. He would however tell the rascal what he thought of him, take his name and report him; and if he was a tenant of the laird's at the time he might as well thereafter shift without waiting to be sent about his business. The verderer had, naturally, more sympathy with his master's potentiality and privileges than with the limited life-horizon of the neighbouring Macreas.

And so down to the laird's garden again, whence, having eaten a Sforza fig and an Emperor plum, I return to the little village on the lodi, its penury and its smells. That is a curious inference of Dr. Sven Hedin's in his book *Across Asia* where he says: "The glen was both wild and picturesque, the mountain scenery being on an imposing scale; consequently the people who inhabit it were frank, cheerful, and liberal-minded." These loch-side villagers live surrounded by just such landscape charms, but like the Corsicans and other mountain-bred folk of my acquaintance, they fail in those very qualities which, according to Dr. Hedin, belong to their birthright. They are too much in bondage to the tyranny of their heart-strings for one thing, and too instinctively intelligent for another. A village full of half-brained fools might do well here if they were poor feeders, but discontent must ever be the portion of a hundred or two average Macreas, in spite of the counterpoising and rather sombre charm of an ancestral atmosphere. The laird in the midst of his splendour and purchased powers never can be loved by these unwelcome hangers-on to his coat-tails unless he resolves to sink his own interests in the very troubled lake of theirs.

And that of course is where the difficulty in these modern, as in most other, days happens to lie. The spirit of the times must rule predominant. Our own particular laird would be accounted mad if he dismissed his gamekeepers, bade the Macreas of the village take the white fish at their will, and encouraged them to increase and multiply and enjoy the rather mystic pleasures of a life of abstinence and idleness. He would do anything in reason to save the life of one of these poor, and perhaps lazy, sentimentalists, but why cannot they see that his nor any man's coat-tails were made for such abject clinging? Where is their common sense, their manhood even?

If all these loch-side Macreas were such blithe Stoics in indigence as Sandy and his sister in their inherited kennel, one might meet the question comfortably. No matter for their sense or manhood, one might retort; let them stay where they are and receive half-a-crown a week or so per household from the State as models for a newer and very economical scheme of Poor Relief whereby existing workhouses may be broken up, and the country, as distinct from the towns, be peopled afresh and thus be more closely cultivated. But that were impossible. The pride of the Macreas will help them to bear much privation, but it forbids them to accept doles. If they were thus endowed, I can fancy them throwing their weekly half-crowns to the servants of the laird up the glen, as better accustomed to the receipt of alms. The Black Watch, who were sent south to be exhibited to George the Second at St.

James's Palace, did something of that kind with the guineas the monarch gave than in approval of their inches and costume. It is in the blood of people whose simplicity and devotion to their native spot is so extreme as theirs. And so, with the laird himself, one can only wish them well while they are alive, but no sons and daughters as simple as themselves.

Charles Edwardes

And that's it for this week and hope you all enjoy your weekend.

Alastair